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Title: Electronic Mail Software with Modular Integrated Authoring/Reading Software Components

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David P. Gordon

David P. Gordon

Jan 21, 2004

Date

Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents
Commissioner for Patents
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

APPLICANT'S BRIEF ON APPEAL

A Notice of Appeal to the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences was filed on November 21, 2003 in which Applicant appealed from the final rejection of claims 1-24, 26, and 27 dated May 21, 2003. The small entity appeal brief fee of \$165 is enclosed herewith. If any additional fees are required, please charge such fees to deposit account no. 07-1732.

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(1) REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest is Intellinet, Inc. by virtue of an assignment recorded at REEL 9813, FRAME 0102.

(2) RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no other appeals or interferences which are related to this application or this appeal.

(3) STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-24, 26, and 27 were finally rejected on May 21, 2003. Claim 25 was previously canceled.

(4) STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

No amendments or remarks were submitted after final rejection.

(5) SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The application discloses electronic mail software which includes a main email component (Figs. 2 and 10, pages 18-19 and 25-28) and a plurality of installable components (Figs. 3-5, 7-9, and 11-17, pages 19-25 and 28-39). The installable components include authoring/reading components for creating/reading different kinds of documents and mailbox components for listing different kinds of messages or for listing messages in different styles. The main email component provides an underlying graphical user interface for functions directly associated with the storage and transfer of electronic mail messages, and also handles all data bundling and unbundling required to transform a message created by an authoring component into a MIME compliant message. The authoring/reading components act like applications embedded within the email program and allow specific types of documents such as spreadsheets, graphics, databases, etc. to be created from within the email program and emailed directly. The authoring/reading components also allow received documents to be read without the difficulties traditionally associated with attaching binary files to an email letter. The authoring components of the invention pass data to the main email component which

packages the data as a MIME compliant message. When the message is received, the main email component concatenates and decodes the MIME message and sends the data to the authoring/reading component associated with the MIME type.

(6) THE ISSUES

- A. Whether claims 1-4, 8-11, 20-22, 26, and 27 are anticipated under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) by Wolf et al.;
- B. Whether claim 12 is obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wolf et al.;
- C. Whether claims 13-16 are obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wolf et al. in view of Bradshaw;
- D. Whether claims 5-7, 23 and 24 are obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wolf et al. in view of Hong et al.
- E. Whether claims 17-19 are obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Wolf et al. in view of Bradshaw, and further in view of Hong et al.

(7) GROUPING OF THE CLAIMS

The rejected claims do not stand or fall together, but are divided into eighteen (18) groupings for the reasons set forth in the ARGUMENT section below:

a) Claims 1, 5, 6, and 7;

b) Claim 2;

c) Claim 3;

d) Claim 4;

e) Claim 8;

f) Claim 9;

g) Claim 10;

h) Claim 11;

i) Claim 12;

j) Claims 13, 17, 18, and 19;

k) Claim 14;

l) Claim 15;

m) Claim 16;

n) Claim 20;

o) Claim 21;

p) Claims 22, 23, and 24;

q) Claim 26; and

r) Claim 27.

(8) ARGUMENT

A. Claims 1-4, 8-11, 20-22, 26, and 27 are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claims 1-4, 8-11, 20-22, 26, and 27 have been rejected as being anticipated by Wolf et al. As set forth below, not only are these claims not anticipated by Wolf et al., they are not suggested by the teachings of Wolf et al.

1. Claim 1 contains limitations not taught or suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 1 specifically requires an electronic mail client have “a plurality of authoring and reading components, a first of said plurality of authoring components for creating a representation of a document including an other than text portion and for creating the other than text portion of the document”. It has been the Applicant’s continuous opinion that the present invention is the only email client which has an authoring component capable of creating a non-text portion of a document.

With regard to claim 1, the Examiner stated in the Final Rejection that Wolf et al. discloses “a plurality of word processing components for creating, editing and encoding an internet-compatible email document.” The Examiner further stated that Wolf et al. discloses “editing or decoding of the internet compatible email document.”

The Applicant previously submitted that the Examiner's analysis failed to address every limitation of claim 1. In response to the Applicant's assertion that the rejection did not address all of the claim elements, the Examiner stated in the Final Rejection:

"The Examiner disagrees, because as was explained in the rejection mailed on 11/8/2002 (p.4,L.8- 12), Wolf teaches an invention which employs a container object, and a server object, such as a full featured word processor having authoring components for creating, editing, and encoding internet-compatible message (c.2,L.8-67, c.9,L.1-c.10,L.67, fig.3). It was well known in the art at the time of the invention, that full-featured word processors, such as the one being utilized by Wolf, had components for authoring increasingly complex documents as witnessed by Wolf (c.1,L.27-34). These components would enable a user to create or drawn objects' color or highlight text with a highlighting component, borders, shading, tables, and special bullets—other than text portions of a document."

The rejection mailed on 11/8/02 did not say anything about container objects and server objects. Moreover, the concept of containers is indicative of the lack of authoring ability. At the time the invention was made, some word processors would allow a graphic image to be placed in a word processing document, but did not permit authoring the graphic image. The graphic image had to be created with a separate program. The very title of the Wolf reference supports the Applicant's position. The Wolf title is "System and Method for In-Place Editing of an Electronic Mail Message Using a Separate Program". [Emphasis added.] A separate program is not a "component" of an email client as that term is used in claim 1 and throughout the specification or as would be fairly understood by someone skilled in the art.

The statement that “[t]hese components would enable a user to create or draw objects, color or highlight text with a highlighting component, borders, shading, tables, and special bullets—other than text portions of a document...” is not clear. Regardless, it is maintained by the Applicant that Wolf does not teach a mail client having the authoring abilities of the invention claimed in claim 1. It is the Applicant’s position that the full featured word processor having components for creating, editing, and encoding internet-compatible message(s) cited by the Examiner as being shown in Wolf et al. does not amount to “a plurality of authoring components” as claimed in claim 1. The Applicant also maintains that editing “color or highlight text with a highlighting component, borders, shading, tables, and special bullets” is still merely text authoring and not “creating the other than text portion of the document” as claimed in claim 1.

For all of these reasons, Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the email client claimed in claim 1.

2. Claim 2 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 2 requires that at least one of the plurality of components is an installable component. The Examiner stated that the spelling checker in Wolf is “an installable authoring component”. The only thing installable in the Wolf reference are forms and mail notes which are not “authoring components” as that term is described and used in

the specification and appealed claims and as fairly understood by those skilled in the art.

Wolf et al. states at col. 4, lines 9-19:

“Instead of implementing text editing or word processing functionality in the mail note itself, the mail note allows a separate, full-featured word processing program to display and edit the email message in the view port provided by the mail note. The mail note then extracts the message data from the word processor and reformats the data to comply with the format required by the email client program.”

Thus, Wolf et al. specifically teaches away from including authoring functionality in the installable mail note, and requires the use of a separate program. From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 2.

3. Claim 3 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 3 requires that the authoring components include either a game component, a spreadsheet component, or a graphic component, and that at least two of the authoring components provide different user interfaces from each other. Regarding claim 3, the Examiner stated that Wolf discloses editing an email document using a “spreadsheet, desktop publishing applications, etc. It is respectfully submitted that the mere mention of spreadsheet and desktop publishing in Wolf et al. is not a teaching that the spreadsheet or desktop publishing application be an authoring component of an email client.

The following three quotes consist of the total disclosure of spreadsheets and desktop publishing in the Wolf et al. patent. First,

“[a]n example of a foreign frame is a word processing document frame in which an embedded spreadsheet object is being displayed. FIG. 3 illustrates a word processing document frame 300. The frame 300 includes text 305 and an embedded graphics object 310.” Col. 9, lines 50-54.

This first teaching has nothing to do with authoring a graphic object or a spreadsheet object. It merely says that a non-text object may be pasted into an otherwise text email document but the non-text object is not authored by the word processor. The Applicant has tried to explain this difference and point to phrases in claim 1 which clearly indicate what is meant by an authoring component, but it appears that the Examiner has not focused on this important distinction. Next,

“[t]his member function is used by the word processor 1010 to convert between an MSOOBJECT that is a mail attachment and an MSOOBJECT that is a Packager OLE object that contains the attached file. This is used when the user moves an MSOOBJECT from a container mail note 1005 to a non-mail document (such as a spreadsheet or a regular word processor document) or the reverse. MSOOBJECT's that are mail attachments can only exist in a container mail note.” Col. 18, lines 26-34.

In this second quote, there is no teaching of creating a non-text object with an authoring component of an email client. The only teaching is the display of non-text objects attached to or placed in a mail document. These non-text objects are authored by separate programs. Finally,

“[f]or example, the DocObject interfaces may be used to allow a spreadsheet program or desktop publishing

program to display their respective documents in the view port provided by the container mail note.” Col. 23, lines 63-66. [Emphasis added.]

This third quote should be read as a specific teaching away from the present invention. It calls for different programs which are not part of the email program to be used to display attachments to an email. There is no teaching of an email authoring component. In fact, the entire thrust of the Wolf et al. patent teaches away from the present invention.

The Wolf et al. patent is mainly concerned with the use of a word processor with an email client to generate and display rich text documents (i.e. text having selectable fonts, underlining, italics, etc.). The word processor is not a component of the email client, as it is a separate program. In addition, the word processor does not create anything other than text. One could even say that the absence of authoring anything but text is “conspicuous” in the Wolf et al. patent.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 3.

4. Claim 4 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 4 specifies that at least one of the authoring components is a database component, a presentation component, or a puzzle component. The Examiner rejected

this claim based on the statement in Wolf that “the interfaces and techniques described herein may be applied to incorporate other types of application programs in the container mail note.” This broad statement is not a teaching or suggestion of a database authoring component, a presentation authoring component, or a puzzle authoring component. Moreover, the examples given by Wolf et al. following this quote refer to programs for displaying documents, not for authoring an email message.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 4.

5. Claim 8 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 8 specifies that the email client includes a plurality of installable mailbox/browser components, each displaying different types of documents in the user’s mailbox. These components are explained in the specification. See, e.g., pages 9 and 10 of the specification.

“For example, if a graphical authoring/reading component is installed, it may be desirable to provide a mailbox browser which shows a thumbnail of the selected graphic email message when a list of messages is displayed.”

In rejecting claim 8, the Examiner referred to the same portions of Wolf used to reject claim 4. These sections have nothing to do with mailbox browsers and Wolf does not

teach or suggest the use of different mailbox browser components. In addition, Wolf does not teach or suggest any installable components.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 8.

6. Claim 9 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 9 specifies that the email client includes a plurality of installable mailbox/browser components, each displaying mailbox contents in a different style. The Examiner's rejection of this claim is simply a reference to the rejection of claim 8. Claim 9 is clearly different from claim 8 and thus has not been properly addressed by the Examiner.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 9.

7. Claim 10 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 10 specifies that encoding and decoding means of claim 1 communicate bidirectionally with the authoring components. The Examiner rejected this claim on the

grounds that the email program of Wolf allows the user to read and reply to email messages. This may suggest some sort of bidirectionality but it does not teach or suggest the subject matter of claim 10.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 10.

8. Claim 11 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 11 specifies that at least one of the authoring components includes means for recognizing whether a user is an author or a reader and for responding differently to authors and readers. The Examiner rejected this claim citing the same portion of Wolf used to reject claim 10. Claim 11 is clearly different from claim 10 and thus has not been properly addressed by the Examiner.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 11.

9. Claim 20 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 20 is a method claim which is similar to claim 1 but which contains the specific limitation of linking a document authoring component with a document encoding component. Claim 20 was finally rejected on the ground that it corresponds to claim 1. Thus, the arguments made above with regard to claim 1 apply to this rejection as well. Moreover, Wolf et al. does not teach or suggest the linking step claimed in claim 20. Wolf teaches linking an object (document or portion of a document) with an email message, but not linking a document authoring component to a document encoding component.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 20.

10. Claim 22 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 22 is a method claim which depends from claim 20 and includes the step of linking a document authoring component with a document decoding component. This claim was finally rejected on the ground that it corresponds to claim 8. Clearly, it does not correspond to claim 8 and thus has not been properly addressed by the Examiner.

Moreover, it is submitted that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the steps claimed in claim 22.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 22.

11. Claim 27 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 27 is an independent apparatus claim which is similar to claim 1 but with an additional limitation of means for determining which reading components are needed to read documents which automatically opens documents with the needed reading component. Claim 27 was finally rejected on the ground that it corresponds to claim 11. Clearly, it does not correspond to claim 11 and thus has not been properly addressed by the Examiner. Moreover, it is submitted that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 27.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 27.

12. Claim 21 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 21 depends from claim 20 and includes the method step of linking a plurality of document authoring components with a single document encoding component. The Examiner's rejection of this claim is based on the same sections of Wolf used to reject claim 4. Claim 21 is clearly different from claim 4 and thus has not been properly addressed by the Examiner. In addition, Wolf does not teach or suggest linking any authoring component to a document encoding component and certainly does not teach or suggest linking multiple authoring components to a single document encoding component.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 21.

13. Claim 26 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 26 is an independent apparatus claim which includes a plurality of authoring and reading components, automatic encoding means which encodes messages with a message type identifier, and automatic decoding means where the message type identifier is used to determine which reading component is used to read a decoded email message. In finally rejecting this claim, the Examiner relied on columns 2 and 20 of the

Wolf reference. Col. 2 of Wolf discusses the use of a container object and a server object. Col. 20 discusses the use of mail notes to pass objects from the email client to a separate word processor. According to Wolf, as described succinctly in the Abstract:

“The mail note, which is a DocObject container, creates a DocObject server by invoking a DocObject-enabled word processor. The mail note provides a view port in which the word processor displays and edits the body of the email message. The word processor provides its formatting and editing features in the context of the mail note. OLE menu merging provides both email and word processing interoperability while editing the message. Programming interfaces between the mail note and the word processor allow the mail note to translate message data back and forth between the word processor's format and the format imposed by the email client. This ensures that messages created with the word processor can be read by other email clients.”

Although this may seem like the claimed encoding and decoding means, it is actually quite different. The last sentence of the Wolf Abstract is perhaps the most telling. In Wolf et al. “messages created with the word processor can be read by other email clients.” This clearly infers that no special reading component is necessary. All of the messages created by Wolf et al. are of the same type; i.e., the type that can be read by any other email client. In claim 26, however, the encoding means encodes messages with a “message type identifier” which is used to determine which reading component is needed to read a decoded email message.” For example, if a message is created with authoring component “A”, it must be read with reading component “A”. Likewise, if it is created with authoring component “B”, it must be read with reading component “B”. Clearly, Wolf et al. does not teach or suggest encoding an email message with a message type identifier as claimed in claim 26.

In addition, if one were to view the mail notes in Wolf as corresponding to the encoding and decoding means in claim 26, the match would not fit because claim 26 specifies separate encoding and decoding means, i.e., clauses b and c.

Moreover, the claimed encoding and decoding means service all of the plurality of authoring and reading components. In Wolf, the mail note, if one were to read it as corresponding to the claimed encoding and decoding means, is only capable of working with a single separate application.

Furthermore, Wolf et al. discloses only one authoring program, i.e. the word processor. The spreadsheet and desktop publishing programs are mentioned only as capable of displaying attachments to an email document, not as authoring an email document.

As discussed above, Wolf et al. teaches away from the present invention by connecting separate programs with an email client rather than installing integrated components in an email client as described and claimed in the instant application. Wolf et al. chose to use the mail note as a means for passing data between the email client and a separate program. This is quite different from the present invention which requires a plurality of authoring and reading components in a single program, i.e. the claimed electronic mail client.

Moreover, all of the email edited by the separate program in Wolf et al. must be readable by any email client. Wolf et al. states at col. 4, lines 9-19:

“Instead of implementing text editing or word processing functionality in the mail note itself, the mail note allows a separate, full-featured word processing program to display and edit the email message in the view port provided by the mail note. The mail note then extracts the message data from the word processor and reformats the data to comply with the format required by the email client program. This allows the user to edit and view email messages using the editing environment and formatting capabilities of the full-featured word processing program, while also providing messages that are compatible with various types of email clients.”

The present invention as described and claimed herein provides for authoring and reading components that are part of the email client. Although the messages created by the authoring components are encoded into Internet compatible mail, they are not compatible with various types of email clients. They can only be read by an email client according to the invention which has the proper reading component. This is indicated in claim 26 by the message type identifier which is used to determine which reading component is needed to read a decoded email message.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 26.

B. Claim 12 is neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al.

Claim 12 depends from claim 1 and further specifies that at least one of the authoring components includes means for allowing a user to create a read-only document.

The Examiner's final rejection of claim 12 stated that creating a read-only document would have been obvious because of Wolf et al. col. 23, lines 64-67. These lines of Wolf et al. state: "DocObject interfaces may be used to allow a spreadsheet program or desktop publishing program to display their respective documents in the view port provided by the container mail note." What this passage of Wolf et al. really seems to say is that the spreadsheet program and desktop publishing program can be used to read email attachments but not to author an email message. This is quite different from an authoring tool which has the capability of making a document read-only. Thus, it is not understood how this part of Wolf et al. applies to claim 12. Again, it appears that the Examiner has failed to properly address every limitation of the claim.

From the foregoing, it is clear that Wolf et al. neither teaches nor suggests the invention claimed in claim 12.

C. Claims 13-16 are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

1. Claim 13 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

Claim 13 is an independent apparatus claim similar in scope to claim 1 but including the feature that at least one of the authoring components includes means for determining whether the user is the student or the teacher. This feature dovetails with the features described above regarding the inability to read or author a document unless the proper component is installed and the feature that documents can be made read-only. The utility of this feature is described in the specification pages 10-11 and 24-25.

The arguments made above regarding Wolf et al. and the claimed authoring components, encoding means and decoding means apply to this rejection as well. The Examiner cites Bradshaw for teaching the feature that at least one of the authoring components includes means for determining whether the user is the student or the teacher. Bradshaw relates to a security system which limits access to the contents of a computer or the contents of the worldwide web. Bradshaw mentions that a teacher could use the system to limit student access. However, this is far from disclosing or suggesting an email authoring component which distinguishes between a teacher and a student. In finally rejecting this claim the Examiner stated that it would have been obvious to combine the “monitoring of a student by a teacher through a password protected account”

because “Bradshaw teaches above the monitoring, and blocking of offensive email messages by a supervisor-teacher.” Even if the Examiner’s analysis were correct, it would only apply to reading components, not to the authoring components claimed in claim 13.

For the foregoing reasons it is clear that claim 13 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

2. Claim 14 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

Claim 14 depends from claim 13 and includes the same limitation as previously discussed with regard to claim 2. Therefore, the arguments made regarding claims 13 and 2 apply to claim 14.

For the foregoing reasons it is clear that claim 14 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

3. Claim 15 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

Claim 15 depends from claim 13 and further specifies that at least one authoring component is a game component, a workbook component, or a graphic editor component.

As argued above, Wolf et al. describes only one authoring component, i.e. a word processor. In finally rejecting claim 15, the Examiner again refers to col. 23, lines 61-67 which suggests that other separate programs could be used to display their respective documents. This is not a teaching or suggestion regarding any authoring component. It only relates to reading components. Moreover, reference to a spreadsheet and a desktop publishing program is not a suggestion of a game component, a workbook component, or a graphic editor component. It should be recalled that, although many word processing and desktop publishing programs today include graphic editing capabilities, this was not true at the time the invention was made.

For the foregoing reasons it is clear that claim 15 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

4. Claim 16 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

Claim 16 depends from claim 13 and further specifies that at least one authoring component is a database component, a presentation component, or a puzzle component. The Examiner's final rejection of this claim is based on the same grounds as the rejection of claim 15 and the remarks made above regarding claim 15 apply to this claim as well. In addition, there is no suggestion in Wolf et al. that a database authoring component, a presentation authoring component, or a puzzle authoring component could be used to edit an electronic mail message. The only authoring component taught by Wolf et al. is a

word processor. The other components mentioned by Wolf et al. are not authoring components, they are components for reading attachments to an email message.

For the foregoing reasons it is clear that claim 16 contains limitations which are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. or Bradshaw, taken alone or in combination.

D. Claims 5-7, 23 and 24 are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. in view of Hong et al.

Claims 5-7 are grouped with claim 1 and the arguments made above regarding claim 1 apply to these claims as well.

Claims 23 and 24 are grouped with claim 22 and the arguments made above regarding claim 22 apply to these claims as well.

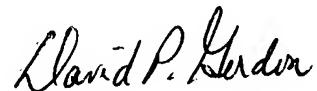
E. Claims 17-19 are neither taught nor suggested by Wolf et al. in view of Bradshaw, and further in view of Hong et al.

Claims 17-19 are grouped with claim 13 and the arguments made above regarding claim 13 apply to these claims as well.

F. Conclusion

In light of all of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in order for allowance, and the applicant respectfully requests that the Board direct the Examiner to allow the case.

Respectfully submitted,



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(9) APPENDIX

1. (previously presented) An electronic mail client, comprising:
 - a) a plurality of authoring and reading components, a first of said plurality of authoring components for creating a representation of a document including an other than text portion and for creating the other than text portion of the document;
 - b) encoding means for automatically encoding said representation created with said authoring components into an Internet-compatible email message; and
 - c) decoding means for automatically decoding said representation encoded by said encoding means.
2. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, wherein:
said plurality of authoring components include at least one installable component.
3. (previously presented) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, wherein:
said plurality of authoring components includes at least one component selected from the group consisting of a game component, a spreadsheet component, and a graphic editor component wherein at least two of said authoring components provide user interfaces different from each other.
4. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, wherein:
said plurality of authoring components includes at least one component selected from the group consisting of a database component, a presentation component, and a puzzle component.

5. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, wherein:
said encoding means includes MIME-compatible encoding means.
6. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, wherein:
said encoding means includes means for creating a MIME file and means for
creating a multipart MIME message,
each of said authoring component cooperating with said encoding means such that
a creation of said MIME file and said multipart MIME message is transparent to a user.
7. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 6, wherein:
said decoding means includes means for concatenating a multipart MIME
message and means for decoding a MIME file,
each of said authoring component cooperating with said decoding means such that
a concatenation of said multipart MIME message and said decoding of MIME files is
transparent to the user.
8. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, further comprising:
d) a plurality of installable mailbox/browser components, each of said mailbox/browser
components displaying different types of documents in a user's mailbox.
9. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, further comprising:

d) a plurality of installable mailbox/browser components, each of said mailbox/browser components displaying mailbox contents in a different style.

10. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, wherein:

 said encoding means and said decoding means communicate bidirectionally with
 said authoring components.

11. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, wherein:

 at least one of said authoring components includes means for recognizing whether
 a user is an author or a reader and for responding differently to authors and readers.

12. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 1, wherein:

 at least one of said authoring components includes means for allowing a user to
 create a read-only document.

13. (original) An electronic mail client for a student and a teacher, comprising:

 a) a plurality of authoring components, a first of said plurality of authoring components
 for creating a representation of a text document and a second of said plurality of
 authoring components for creating a representation of a document including other than
 text;

 b) encoding means for automatically encoding representations created with said
 authoring components into an email message; and

c) decoding means for automatically decoding said representations encoded with said encoding means, wherein

at least one of said authoring components includes means for determining whether the user is the student or the teacher.

14. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 13, wherein:

said plurality of authoring components include at least one installable component.

15. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 13, wherein:

said plurality of authoring components includes at least one component selected from the group consisting of a game component, a workbook component, and a graphic editor component.

16. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 13, wherein:

said plurality of authoring components includes at least one component selected from the group consisting of a database component, a presentation component, and a puzzle component.

17. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 13, wherein:

said encoding means includes MIME-compatible encoding means.

18. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 13, wherein:

said encoding means includes means for creating a MIME file and means for creating a multipart MIME message,

each of said authoring components cooperating with said encoding means such that a creation of said MIME file and said multipart MIME message is transparent to the student and the teacher.

19. (original) An electronic mail client according to claim 18, wherein:

said decoding means includes means for concatenating a multipart MIME message and means for decoding a MIME file,

each of said authoring component cooperating with said decoding means such that a concatenation of said multipart MIME message and said decoding of MIME files is transparent to a user.

20. (previously presented) A method of authoring a document and sending it by electronic mail, said method comprising:

a) providing a document-authoring component which authors a portion of a document which is other than a plain-text;

b) providing a document-encoding component which encodes the document as Internet-compatible email;

c) linking the document-authoring component with the document encoding component such that documents generated under said document-authoring component are automatically encoded as Internet-compatible email.

21. (original) A method according to claim 20, wherein:
- said step of providing a document-authoring component includes providing a plurality of document-authoring components, and
- said step of linking includes linking each of said document authoring components with the document-encoding component.
22. (original) A method according to claim 20, further comprising:
- d) providing a document-decoding component which decodes a received document encoded as Internet-compatible email;
- c) linking the document-authoring component with the document decoding component such that documents are automatically decoded.
23. (original) A method according to claim 20, wherein:
- the document-encoding component includes means for creating a MIME file and means for creating a multipart MIME message.
24. (original) A method according to claim 22, wherein:
- the document-decoding component includes means for concatenating a multipart MIME message and means for decoding a MIME file.
25. (canceled)

26. (previously presented) An electronic mail client, comprising:

- a) a plurality of authoring and reading components, each authoring component for creating a different kind of email message;
- b) encoding means for automatically encoding email messages created with said authoring components into an Internet-compatible email message with said email message including a message type identifier; and
- c) decoding means for automatically decoding said email messages encoded by said encoding means, wherein

 said message type identifier is used to determine which reading component is used to read a decoded email message.

27. (previously presented) An electronic mail client, comprising:

- a) a plurality of authoring and reading components for authoring and reading different kinds of documents including documents which have content that is not plain text;
- b) encoding means for automatically encoding said documents created with said authoring components into an Internet-compatible email messages;
- c) decoding means for automatically decoding said documents encoded by said encoding means; and
- d) means for determining which of said plurality of reading components are needed to read said documents, wherein
 said means for determining automatically opens documents with the reading component needed to read it.